

March 5, 1969

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — Extensions of Remarks

E 1657

15, he fell into a coma. Mrs. Parker's efforts to revive him were of no avail, and at about 1 a.m. on Nov. 16 she began to make a series of telephone calls to physicians.

One doctor after another refused to come to her residence. One went so far as to say that if Parker had been in the coma for the hours before Mrs. Parker tried to obtain medical help he could wait a few more hours until morning.

In desperation Mrs. Parker called the police department. Two officers immediately were dispatched. They thought of carrying the tall, heavy Parker down his front steps in a chair, but rejected the idea, fearing that they might drop the man.

A radio call brought a third car with a stretcher. The officers carried Parker down stairs and put him into a neighbor's car for a rapid trip to Oakland's Highland Hospital.

The diagnosis at the hospital was acute pneumonia. Doctors told Mrs. Parker that a delay of a few more hours would have cost her husband his life.

Parker was in a coma for 27 days as doctors fought for his life. The physicians had little hope for him because antibiotic treatment seemed to be failing, but the turning point did come and he returned to consciousness. His total hospital stay ended last week.

"I'd like to extend my personal thanks to those three officers who came to my aid," Parker said. "No words can express my gratitude for their actions."

"It is indeed a pleasure to live under the jurisdiction of such a thoughtful and competent police department."

Mrs. Parker seconded her husband's sentiments.

PLUG LOOPHOLE IN ARMED SERVICES HANDICAPPED PROGRAM

HON. DONALD W. RIEGLE, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. RIEGLE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation which seeks to plug a loophole in the armed services "handicapped" program.

Under present law, we now provide financial assistance for certain contracted health-care benefits to severely mentally retarded or physically handicapped dependents of active duty members of the uniformed services. However, the statutes do not provide for continuance of this care if a member is killed while on active duty or upon that member's retirement. Thus, Mr. Speaker, at a time of greatest financial need when the breadwinner loses his life in service to his country—or retires after a life career, this urgent medical assistance for his dependent is cut off.

I would also stress that this is the only medical benefit provided for dependents of active duty members which is cut off upon the death or retirement of that member. It is ironic that routine benefits such as doctor visits, flu shots, vaccinations, hospital care, and so forth are presently covered, while care for mental retardants and the physically handicapped—which is most expensive and a great financial burden for those people to carry—is the one medical benefit that is denied.

Mr. Speaker, the bill which I am introducing today would, therefore, extend to mentally retarded or physically handicapped dependents of first, a member of

a uniformed service who was killed while on active duty; and second, of former members of the uniformed services, the special care now provided to similarly afflicted dependents of members on active duty. I believe that this is a deficiency that must be corrected so that the urgently needed medical assistance for mentally retarded and physically handicapped dependents can continue.

The Department of Defense has estimated that the additional cost for the extension of this program would be about \$5.5 million a year. This is a modest price to pay for the great financial relief that such an extension would bring to these deserving people.

Mr. Speaker, 34 of my colleagues have joined me in bipartisan support of this measure, and I am hopeful that additional sponsorship will follow.

MAURICE H. STANS

HON. WILLIAM J. GREEN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. GREEN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last year I had the privilege of serving as chairman of the Census and Statistics Subcommittee of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee. The experience impressed upon me the important role that statistical data plays in American life.

Social welfare legislation we pass in Congress is, in fact, based on the data compiled by the Bureau of Census. We use our social indicators to describe problems and to seek solutions to them.

In the past year there has been considerable discussion about information collected by Census and their possible invasion of privacy.

On February 27, Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans testified before the Joint Economic Committee. He closed his statement with a defense of the need for census data. I thought it would be helpful to my colleagues to read his statement which follows:

EXCERPT FROM STATEMENT OF MAURICE H. STANS, SECRETARY OF COMMERCE, BEFORE THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE ON FEBRUARY 27, 1969

OTHER MATTERS

With your permission, I wish to outline two matters of policy which come within the range of interest of your Committee and which are of great concern to the Department of Commerce.

The first is the preparation for the Nineteenth Decennial Census in 1970. A somewhat synthetic issue has been raised as to whether the Census questions constitute an invasion of the people's entitlement to privacy. The contra factor is modern Government's needs for accurate information as a basis for reaching economic and social judgments.

The second is the development of minority business enterprise, with both the Government and the business community providing assistance. The President has asked the Commerce Department to take a leading role in this area.

THE 1970 CENSUS

The Joint Economic Committee has for many years shown close interest in the statistics

activities of the Bureau of the Census, the Office of Business Economics, and other Government agencies, and has made constructive suggestions for their improvement.

Consequently, I feel sure that this Committee will share my concern over the growing support for proposals that threaten to do serious damage to the quality of some of our most basic demographic and economic statistics. I refer to proposals that would sharply limit the number and nature of questions people would be required to answer in the 1970 Decennial Census.

It is easy to understand why there should be a certain amount of annoyance over being asked to fill out questionnaires. Nevertheless, it is both inappropriate and unfortunate that this is contended to be an invasion of privacy.

Actually, the 1970 Census will be, for most people, less burdensome and no more invasive of privacy than previous Decennial Censuses. For the first time, about three out of five families will receive and be able to return their questionnaires by mail without ever seeing a census enumerator. Most families will be able to fill out their questionnaires in about 15 minutes. The total number of questions will be about the same as in 1960 and less than were asked in 1950 or 1940. A limited number of questions will be asked of every household. Most of the questions, however, will be asked of only one household in four, selected on a random basis. As has always been the case, answers given the Census Bureau will be strictly confidential and cannot be published or given to any other Government agency except in the form of statistical totals.

The Decennial Census is the one occasion when we try to get complete information on certain key characteristics of our population and the homes our people live in. This is vital information for all levels of government, down to local school districts, if they are to carry out their responsibilities intelligently.

The American people have always regarded the Decennial Census as one of the least onerous obligations of citizenship. They have cooperated willingly and taken great interest in the results. I believe it would be an extremely disturbing development if this spirit of cooperation should, as a result of a fallacious challenge, be undermined.

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

In regard to the development of minority business enterprise, President Nixon stated in his Inaugural Address that we must draw into the solution of our socio-economic problems all the strength of our Nation. Government and private enterprise will need to act together in dealing with these problems. Capitalism and private enterprise must present challenging opportunities for minority groups as well as for those who are in the mainstream of our national economic life.

One aspect of our urban problem is the separation of those in our minority groups from involvement in the country's principal economic activities. There are many different ways of tackling this problem but one of the most promising is to assist them in setting up their own business enterprises.

OTTO OTEPKA—STATE DEPARTMENT BACKLASH

HON. JOHN R. RARICK

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. RARICK. Mr. Speaker, Otto Otepka refuses to be silenced or compromised at any price. And, in the meantime, millions of Americans are beginning to wonder what part of the promised

E 1658

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—Extensions of Remarks

March 5, 1969

cleanup at State is denying Otto Otepka his former position.

Mr. Speaker, I include pertinent news articles following my remarks:

[From the Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader, Feb. 26, 1969]

SENATOR NIXON FADED PROTECTING WITNESSES

(By Edith K. Roosevelt)

WASHINGTON.—When he was a young senator, President Richard M. Nixon introduced a bill designed to protect government officials who supply information to congressional committees when asked to do so.

This same bill has now been introduced by Rep. John R. Rarick (D-La.). In introducing his bill on Feb. 17, Judge Rarick indicated that the bill would be effective in exposing security risks by protecting government officials like Otto Otepka from departmental reprisals.

Otepka, a former State Department security chief, was ousted from his job after answering questions truthfully on lax security procedures, before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Although Nixon promised during his campaign to thoroughly reexamine the Otepka case and see that justice was done, Secretary of State William P. Rogers has refused to reinstate Otepka in his old job. Otepka is now preparing to take his case to the courts as soon as he finds a new lawyer.

OFFERED JUDGESHIP

The Manchester Union Leader and The Vermont Sunday News reported exclusively that Otepka's lawyer, Robert Robb, had been offered a judgeship on the Appellate Court of the District of Columbia.

Rarick believes that by reintroducing his bill, real insight will be provided on the attitude of the so-called "new Nixon" towards the doctrine of executive privilege and national security matters. The bill makes it a violation for any officer of the federal government to dismiss or otherwise discipline a government employee for testifying before a committee of Congress.

Nixon introduced his bill on April 26, 1951, a few days before the hearings on our Far Eastern policy, the conduct of the Korean War, and the dismissal of Gen. Douglas MacArthur by the President.

Nixon said in introducing his bill on the Senate floor:

"It is essential to the security of the nation and the very lives of the people, as we look into these vitally important issues, that every witness have complete freedom from reprisal when he is given an opportunity to tell what he knows."

TOO MUCH AT STAKE

"There is too much at stake to permit foreign policy and military strategy to be established on the basis of half truths and the suppression of testimony."

"Unless protection is given to witnesses who are members of the armed services or employees of the government the scheduled hearings will amount to no more than a parade of 'yes men' for administration policies as they exist."

Nixon pointed out that in the past, reprisals had been carried out against witnesses employed by the U.S. government who told the truth before Congress. His measure (S. 1390) was designed to correct this situation, he said.

"The bill I have introduced is designed to assure any member of the armed forces or other officer or employee of the government who can offer pertinent and constructive testimony that he can speak the truth without suffering the fate of Admiral Denfeld on account of such testimony."

Rarick's bill (H.R. 6787), which is the same as Nixon's, has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

Liberty Lobby, a populist oriented, activist organization in the national Capital, is urging its more than 200,000 subscribers to support the "Nixon-Rarick" bill by a massive letter writing campaign to the President and the Congress.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Mar. 4, 1969]
NIKON'S STATE DEPARTMENT CLEANUP STILL MISSING

(By Willard Edwards)

WASHINGTON.—A high ranking state department officer was found fuming in his office last week. He had just been informed by friends on Capitol hill that their entreaties on his behalf for promotion to a higher post had been rejected by William P. Rogers, secretary of state.

The officer was a veteran with an exceptional record, held back from promotion to higher levels under Democratic regimes, everyone agreed, only because he never concealed his Republican party affiliations.

The office to which he aspired was held by a Democrat of little experience but with powerful political connections under the Johnson administration.

With a Republican administration now in power, influential G.O.P. senators and representatives urged Rogers to remedy this inequity. He sent back word that it seemed politically unwise to remove the Democratic incumbent.

The major cause of the officers indignation, however, was not this rebuff to his hopes. What irked him was a postscript by Rogers in his vote to the sponsoring member of Congress:

"You will be happy to know," Rogers wrote, "that we are retaining Mr. —— in his present post and are well satisfied with his performance."

"That was a meaningless statement and the secretary must have known it," the officer remarked. "I am a career civil service officer and the secretary can not touch me without filing charges of misconduct and proving them. He can refuse to promote me but he cannot demote or remove me."

This incident, plus many of similar nature, is being cited by disgruntled Republicans who have discovered there is not going to be the "house cleaning" in the state department promised by Nixon in a campaign talk broadcast from Dallas last Oct. 13.

PLEDGES STATE DEPARTMENT CLEANUP

"I want a secretary of state that will join me in cleaning house in the state department," Nixon said at the time. "It has never been done. . . . It wasn't done even during the Eisenhower administration."

"There are some good men in the state department and I know who they are. The routine men that have been the architects of the past, they will have other assignments and we are going to bring in new men with a fresh approach."

Coupled with his words nine days earlier, in an interview at Williamsburg, Va., in which he promised to see that "justice" was accorded to Otto F. Otepka, Nixon's "house cleaning" pledge led to gloomy forebodings in the department. There was even speculation that Otepka, the demoted security officer who has been waging a five-year battle for vindication, might be one of the "good men" Nixon had in mind.

When Nixon won the Presidency and announced Rogers as his pick for secretary of state, 77 state department officers wrote out their resignations. But when Rogers announced that Idar Rimestad would be retained as deputy undersecretary for administration, the resignations were never submitted to the White House.

"ARCHITECTS OF PAST" SEEM SECURE

The "architects of the past" began to realize they were safe in their jobs. Their delight over this development was climaxed

by Rogers' disclosure Feb. 21 that he had rejected Otepka's appeal for reinstatement. He said he saw no reason to cancel the penalty (demotion, reprimand, and removal from security assignments) imposed upon Otepka by his predecessor, Dean Rusk, for giving frank testimony to a Senate subcommittee about lax security in the department.

"The Otepka case has stirred up a hornet's nest across the country," said Rep. Ed Derwinski (R., Ill.), a member of the House foreign affairs committee. "I'm getting a burst of indignant mail about it."

"I'm going to insist that our committee question him about it and also about what he's doing to check security in the department. That's the first duty of a new secretary of state."

Meanwhile, reports are gaining currency here that Rogers is only an interim secretary of state and will be appointed to the Supreme court when a vacancy is created in June by the resignation of Chief Justice Earl Warren.

[From the Government Employees Exchange, Mar. 5, 1969]

ROGERS-ROBB "DOUBLE TALK" UPSETS NIXON'S STRATEGY

A series of "blunders" committed through "doubletalk" by Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Roger Robb, the Attorney for Otto F. Otepka, has imperiled the Capitol Hill strategy of President Nixon to appease simultaneously the "hard" and "soft" factions of the Republican party. A high official in the Department of Justice informed this newspaper on February 28.

Under this strategy, until President Nixon could "feel his way pragmatically" through the solution of the Vietnam war, Mr. Rogers was supposed to play the "sophisticated role" of appeasing the "doves" while the Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, was to appease the "hawks," the source said.

The Attorney General, John N. Mitchell, and the Department of Justice were supposed to appease both groups by "selected" appointments to the bench, the source commented.

"SACRIFICE" OTEPKA

In keeping with this arrangement, President Nixon and Secretary of State Rogers had agreed it would be necessary to "sacrifice" Otto F. Otepka, the former chief Security Advisor of the State Department seeking reinstatement, to the "liberals," the source said, by not re-examining his case and reinstating him to his job, a position from which he had been ousted by Secretary of State Dean Rusk. "It's too bad Otepka didn't work at the Pentagon," the source commented. "There he could have been reinstated without any trouble."

However, to keep Mr. Otepka's Senate supporters happy by saving them embarrassment, it was also agreed that the President would nominate at a very early date in the future Roger Robb, Mr. Otepka's Attorney, as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Under this arrangement, Mr. Robb would have to resign as Mr. Otepka's Attorney the moment his nomination was sent to the Senate for confirmation.

ROBB APPOINTMENT

Mr. Robb's appointment to the court was expected by all parties to be approved without delay because of the "high esteem" in which he was held by the Senate Judiciary Committee, the source said.

OTEPKA COMPENSATION

To compensate Mr. Otepka for his "sacrifice" to the Nixon cause of concurrent appeasement of both the "hard" and "soft" lines in the Republican party, Secretary Rogers had worked out a tentative "deal" with a major private corporation in the "aerospace industry" to hire Mr. Otepka at a salary almost double he would be receiving as Chief Advisor at the State Department.

THE BLUNDERS

The first "blunder" committed by Secretary Rogers, the source claimed was that neither Mr. Otepka nor his lawyer, Roger Robb, was informed about the details of the prospective private industry job. Instead, in a January 21 personal meeting, Secretary Rogers merely informed Mr. Robb that he did not wish Mr. Otepka in the State Department at all and would arrange for his employment in private industry.

The second "blunder" was then made by Mr. Robb, who did not reveal to Mr. Otepka that he had had a personal meeting with the Secretary Rogers, the source said. Instead, Mr. Robb stated that "third parties" told him that Secretary Rogers had indicated he did not wish Mr. Otepka to return to the State Department as an "active security officer."

These two "blunders" were compounded by a third "blunder," committed by Secretary Rogers, who, on February 19, informed Mr. Otepka that he had "concluded your case had been fully and exhaustively litigated within the Executive branch of the Government in accordance with the applicable provision of law and the regulations of the Department of State and the Civil Service Commission."

According to the source, when Secretary Rogers signed the letter of February 19 he was under the impression that Mr. Robb had correctly communicated to Mr. Otepka both his own offer to find a job in private industry for Mr. Otepka and that Mr. Robb would be nominated to a judgeship.

THE FIASCO

Both these impressions were wrong, and when Mr. Otepka and Mr. Robb had a "confrontation" on February 22, it became clear to both that a "fiasco" was imminent, the source said. The "fiasco" was further increased by the fact that both President Nixon and Secretary Rogers had left the country on their European diplomatic tour and could not be reached immediately.

In the meantime, news had begun "leaking out" from the Department of Justice and the Senate Judiciary Committee that Mr. Robb's name would be sent to the Senate for confirmation immediately following the President's return to Washington.

On February 25, the nationally syndicated columnist, Edith Kermit Roosevelt "broke" the story of Mr. Robb's imminent appointment to the Appeals Court in a copyrighted report published in the *Manchester (N.H.) Union-Leader*.

CHAOS LOOSE

"All chaos has broken loose now," the top official at the Department of Justice stated to this newspaper.

"Something will be done to patch the matter up," he added. However, President Nixon's strategy of keeping both the "hard and soft liners, both the 'hawks' and 'doves' happy, has suffered a serious setback," he concluded.

[From Human Events, Mar. 8, 1969]

ROGERS REJECTS OTEPKA APPEAL

If Robert Flinch is Richard Nixon's Seventh Crisis, then William P. Rogers must be his Eighth," is the way one Capitol Hill commentator put it last week. For not only has Rogers conspicuously failed to clean out the State Department, as Nixon promised would happen under his Administration, but the secretary of state has now lowered the axe on Otto Otepka, the State Department security expert who was given a raw deal by the Democrats and whom Nixon promised to aid at least three times during the 1968 campaign.

Rogers' stinging rebuke to Otepka came in a letter dated February 19—just prior to the secretary of state's leaving for Europe with President Nixon. In this letter, Rogers rejected Otepka's appeal for reinstatement as a high-ranking security officer in the department.

"Having carefully reviewed the documents

tion," Rogers wrote Otepka, "I have concluded that your case has been fully and exhaustively litigated within the executive branch of the government in accordance with the applicable provisions of law and the regulations of the Department of State and the Civil Service Commission."

Rogers, in effect, then told Otepka he could give up or take his case to court. Otepka's only consolation was that the department indicated it would grant leave pay for a short while if he decided to make a court appeal—which Otepka, by the way, says he intends to do.

The shabby treatment of Otepka by Rogers comes as another disappointment to Nixon supporters who were under the definite impression that the Nixon Administration would deal far more kindly with Otepka than did the Kennedy-Johnson regimes.

No fewer than three times during the campaign did Nixon agree to give a sympathetic look at the Otepka case—and in each instance he indicated a partiality toward the man, though he claimed he would not pre-judge the evidence.

On April 9, 1968, in a letter to an Otepka supporter he wrote that he intended "to see that justice was done to the man who served his country so long and so well."

On October 4, Nixon told Chicago Tribune columnist Willard Edwards: "It will be my intention to order a full and exhaustive review of all the evidence in this case with a view to seeing that justice is accorded this man who has served his country so long and so well."

In late October, James M. Stewart asked Nixon in Mount Prospect, Ill., to "Please help Otepka." According to Stewart, who heads the American Defense Fund which has helped defray Otepka's legal expenses, Nixon replied: "I will—you'll just have to wait until I get into office."

When Nixon went to the Inaugural Ball held in the Smithsonian Institution, he reiterated his pledge to try to help Otepka. If he supports Rogers' decision—which he apparently does—then he has clearly gone back on his campaign pledge.

The failure to accord Otepka justice will be a great black mark on the Nixon Administration. Otepka, as most *Human Events* readers now know (see Feb. 17, 1968, issue for full story), was a top security officer for the State Department during the Eisenhower-Nixon Administration, but he ran into trouble when he refused to go along with efforts of the Kennedy regime to place people in important jobs without proper security clearance. Not only were people with highly questionable backgrounds getting crucial assignments, but at one point Harlan Cleveland, our current ambassador to the United Nations, asked Otepka, "if there were any prospects for the reemployment of Alger Hiss in the United States government." Hiss had been convicted of perjury for denying his role as a Soviet espionage agent.

As the Democrats began to lower the security standards at State, Otepka was demoted, then locked out of his office, denied access to his files and placed in isolation. A secret tap, he learned, had been placed on his phone. He was lied about and at least three State Department witnesses—after being threatened with perjury by the Senate—felt compelled to alter their testimony before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS). Otepka, by the way, always told the truth. He was subjected to what the SISS called "extraordinary, calculated harassment because he attempted conscientiously to carry out the national security program."

After accusing Otepka of criminal conduct, the State Department, subsequent to lengthy hearings, could conclude that Otepka's only "crime" was his delivery of "two memoranda and [an] investigative report" to the duly constituted Senate Internal Security subcommittee. And all of this material, by

the way, was delivered only after it had been requested by the subcommittee and only for the purpose of proving that he had not lied in sharply disputing statements made by his superiors.

For this "crime," former Secretary of State Dean Rusk demoted Otepka and removed him forever from security duties. Observers say he probably would have fired Otepka, but realized he had too much support on the Hill.

If the Nixon Administration refuses to come to this man's aid, it will have consequences far beyond the plight of Otepka himself, who has already gone into debt to defend his reputation. Surely the failure to reinstate also signifies a continued lowering of security standards for government, a policy that can only imperil the nation's safety. Equally as important, it tells good, decent Americans—who tell the truth and do their duty—that there really is no room for them in the U.S. government. Both Rogers and Nixon are in a position to change all this with one executive order.

[From Human Events, Mar. 8, 1969]

NIXON OPPOSED TRUMAN ORDER

There's an interesting sidelight to that Otepka decision of last week. In turning over three pieces of paper to the Senate Internal Security subcommittee—the only "misdeed" the State Department ever encountered on Otepka's part—Otepka was accused of violating a March 13, 1948, Presidential Directive which forbids anyone in the executive branch of government to turn over to those outside the department documents relating to the loyalty of government employees. President Truman issued the order because federal workers were feeding derogatory information on key Democratic appointees to congressional investigating committees. (Otepka, by the way, did not turn over information to SISS for any purpose other than to prove that he—not his superiors—was telling the truth. The papers contained information in the public domain and did not contain loyalty or security information in the proper sense of that term. Thus he feels he did not violate the Truman order.)

When Truman issued his directive, William P. Rogers was then chief counsel of the Senate Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Department and taking part in an investigation of an accused Communist. Rogers, according to those who knew him, denounced the Truman order as an effort to impede proper investigation by the Congress.

Richard Nixon, who was then a member of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, also denounced it. When Nixon became a California senator, he introduced S. 1390, a piece of legislation which would have effectively repealed the Truman order. In the April 26, 1951, *Congressional Record*, Nixon urged adoption of his measure by saying: "I have introduced in the Senate today a bill to make it a violation of law for any officer of the federal government to dismiss or otherwise discipline a government employee for testifying before a committee of Congress." That was Otepka's only "fault," so why won't Nixon now come to his aid?

A SENSIBLE CHANGE IN THE DEBT LIMIT**HON. SILVIO O. CONTE**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. CONTE. Mr. Speaker, the question of the debt ceiling receives periodic attention. In fact, we read about how the

March 5, 1969

Federal Government seems continually to be asking for an increase in that famous ceiling. On February 26, 1969, the Berkshire Eagle of Pittsfield, Mass., ran a fine editorial on this very subject. I recommend that it be included in the Record because of the importance of the problem both from a fiscal and from a pragmatic point of view:

A SENSIBLE CHANGE IN THE DEBT LIMIT

The fellow who regularly goes on the wagon every New Year's Day and just as regularly falls off it a week later is doubly pathetic. He not only hasn't kicked the habit; he also suffers the ignominy of having tried and failed.

The federal government's annual charade with the debt ceiling is somewhat similar. Every year Congress solemnly sets a new ceiling which is supposed to last forever. And every time a new year with its new budget rolls around, the ceiling has to be lifted again.

But now comes President Nixon with a proposal for a whole new approach to debt-ceiling ritual—an approach that seems to make good sense. In a message to Congress he has asked that the ceiling be made to apply only to that part of the federal debt which is held by the general public—thus eliminating from the total the large quantities of government bonds held as investments by federal "trust funds," most notably the Social Security Administration.

For all practical purposes these trust funds are money which the government owes to itself and, to that extent, can reasonably be excluded from the debt ceiling. Furthermore, excluding them would substantially erase the need for perennial lifting of the ceiling: It is the trust fund debt, currently rising at the rate of about \$10 billion a year, which has made it necessary to increase the total debt limit even in years when the over-all budget is in balance. Under the President's proposed accounting system a debt limit of \$300 billion (as compared to the present statutory limit of \$365 billion) could be put into effect with reasonable assurance that it would last for many years.

One could easily argue, to be sure, that a better approach would be to forget about trying to set limits altogether since there is not the slightest evidence that setting a limit has ever had a deterrent effect upon increasing the debt. But this is a fact which neither Congress nor the public likes to acknowledge. If nominal debt ceilings are a political necessity, as they apparently are right now, the Nixon proposal at least makes them less nonsensical.

BURKE BILL WOULD PREVENT FUTURE TRAGEDIES

HON. J. HERBERT BURKE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. BURKE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in November of 1968, the mercy killing and suicide of an elderly couple who resided in my congressional district, shocked not only the people of my area but the entire Nation itself and served to illustrate the urgent need for national reform of our medicare and private insurance programs.

Floyd F. Slusher, who lived in Hollywood, Fla., fired a bullet into the head of his 81-year-old bed-ridden wife and after killing her, he then took his own life with a bullet from the same gun.

This tragedy spotlighted the attention on the thousands of our "forgotten people" who, like the Slushers, can become paupers overnight when long illnesses attack one or the other.

Floyd Slusher, who was 74, was a proud man. He paid all of his bills promptly as they became due, but after paying a bill of \$1,943, he saw his life savings dwindle to a meager \$1,600. And, he faced more expenses if he was to give his wife, to whom he had been married for 49 years, the custodial hospital attention she so badly needed for the arthritic condition and pain that had made her a hopeless cripple.

Mr. Speaker, I can easily see how the life savings earned by the work and sweat of so many other elderly Americans can be completely wiped out with one illness and how thousands of other families might wish to end their lives, at a time when they should be enjoying their twilight years, because they find themselves paupers and without hope, unwanted charity cases, in a society which fails to recognize their plight. How easy it is for them to suddenly find their funds gobbled up by the high cost of today's medical and hospital care and the constant depreciation of the value of the dollar which they carefully saved for their retirement.

Today, I have, therefore, introduced legislation which I hope will prevent future occurrences of tragedy such as that which happened to Mr. and Mrs. Slusher. My bill would remove the present limit on the number of days for which medicare benefits may be paid thereunder to an individual on account of post-hospital extended care services.

Certainly, it is our responsibility to strive to bring about national reform in our medicare and private insurance programs. It is our responsibility also to insure for our older citizens a more independent and sound economic future—not by words or by plaudits, but instead by our deeds, to show our respect for the contributions they have made in their younger years to making our country strong.

LAUNCHING OF THE SS "HONG KONG MAIL," NEWPORT NEWS, VA.

HON. THOMAS M. PELLY

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1969

Mr. PELLY. Mr. Speaker, our colleague from Virginia (Mr. Downing) called for a meaningful maritime policy in a speech at Newport News, Va. The occasion was the launching of the SS *Hong Kong Mail* on February 8, 1969, at the Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co.

Since so many Members want a maritime program that will meet the needs of the United States, I include hereinafter the text of Congressman Downing's speech:

REMARKS OF HONORABLE THOMAS N. DOWNING

For someone who was born and reared just a few blocks away from here, this is a moment of understandable pride for me. This is

my hometown and I will always feel at home in it.

We build ships here—good ships and the whole world knows it. And when a good ship goes down the ways, As the *Hong Kong Mail* will, in a few minutes, it carries with her the hopes, prayers, and best wishes of the thousands of men and women who gave her life.

I feel a definite kinship with everyone who does business with this shipyard because it says to me that they too, have recognized what we here in Newport News have known all along that this is the greatest shipyard in the world.

It is a pleasure to be here today and to join in welcoming Worth Fowler and his associates to this yard once again. This is the fourth time in less than a year that one of the American mail line ships has been launched here. And I know that he and his vice-president, Ted Sommer, Bill Baptie, chief of the planning division, and designer Jim Henry are as proud of the occasion as I am. The fifth and final cargo liner in the present contract the *SS American Mail*, will be launched here in the middle of April. That will make five in one year, a record of great shipbuilding accomplishment—and a justification of the faith and confidence of the American mail line.

All five of these ships will continue the great tradition of this line in plying the established trade routes which are so vital to the continued development of American business and industry. It is imperative that we maintain these trade route services. It is imperative that our country do all it can to maintain them. If we do not, other nations will move in; the American flag would continue to disappear in the harbors of the world; and we would continue along the path to oblivion as a maritime nation that we, for some unknown reason, seem destined to follow.

The maritime life of this Nation is dependent on a great partnership; a four-way cooperative effort among the shipping companies, the shipbuilders, the men who man them on the high seas, and the Federal Government.

I find no fault generally with the first three members of this quartet. But the same is not true about the Government. We have no meaningful maritime policy today. This lack of concern on the part of the Government is nothing new. Not since Franklin Delano Roosevelt has any President of the United States made a significant contribution to the U.S. flag merchant marine.

This has not been the fault of the representatives of the people. The maritime leadership in both Houses of the Congress has shown the way and has drawn the support from both sides of the political aisle. Unfortunately we have been rebuffed by President after President. It was with dismay that I read in the budget most recently submitted that once again our Government proposes to subsidize new ship construction at a rate which will not even keep pace with the retirement rate of our over-aged merchant vessels.

I call upon our new President as I have called upon his three immediate predecessors to reverse this trend; to follow the leadership of the Congress; and to give this Nation a shipbuilding program which will relieve the dreadful situation in which we find ourselves; that of being at the mercy of other nations of the world to carry our international commerce.

As a nation, we cannot survive on 8-10 new ships a year. At a bare minimum, we must have a program of 35-40 ships for a number of years to come. Mr. Fowler and his company and other progressive operators have demonstrated their willingness. Mr. Holden, Mr. Ackerman and the men and women of this great yard have proven their capability. We have enough men on the bench now to